

REMARKS

Status of the Claims

Claims 63-87 are pending. All currently pending claims have been cancelled and replaced with new claims 63-87.

No New Matter Has Been Added

Applicants submit that no new matter has been added by way of the present amendment. For instance, new independent claim 63, wherein the porous membrane is recited as an independent entity, corresponds to previous claim 39. New independent claim 64, wherein the test compounds are disposed on the porous membrane, corresponds to previous claim 40 (which was dependent on previous claim 39). New independent claim 65, wherein the cells of the detector layer are growing on the porous membrane, correspond to previous claim 50 (which was dependent on claim 41 (and claim 39)). Also, three new independent claims (claims 74-76) relating to a method for screening test compounds for bioactivity with parallel structure to claims 63-65 have been added. New dependent claims 66-73 and 78-87 correspond to previously pending dependent claims. Accordingly no new matter has been added.

In view of the present submission, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw all rejections and allow the currently pending claims.

Interview with Examiner

Applicants take this opportunity to thank the Examiner for the courtesies extended during the recent interview of March 26, 2003. Pursuant to the Examiner's request, Applicants have amended the claims to embody separate independent claims which embody the different embodiments of the present invention. In particular, the Examiner requested Applicants to clarify the role of the porous membrane. New claims 63 and 74 relate to the embodiment wherein the porous membrane is an independent entity. New claims 64 and 75 relate to the embodiment wherein the test compounds are disposed on the porous membrane. Lastly, new claims 65 and 76 relate to the embodiment wherein the detector cells are grown on the porous membrane.

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw all rejections and allow the currently pending claims.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Craig A. McRobbie (Reg. No.

42,874) at the (703) 205-8000 to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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LRS/CAM

Version with Markings to Show Changes Made

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 39-41, 43-45, 48-56, and 59-62 were cancelled.

New claims 63-87 were added.